CALIBER
COMICS
ISSUE 24
$2.95 USA $3.95 CAN
NEGATIVE
BURN
METROPOLITAIN
BRIAN BOLLAND • JOE PRUETT • DOUG WHEELER • PAUL POPE • MIKE PERKINS

NEGATIVE BURN

A Mad Hatter Studios
International Product

Joe Pruett ~ Editor

VOLUME ONE
NUMBER TWENTY-FOUR

DESPERADO STUDIOS
P.O. BOX 893,
ACWORTH, GA 30101

COMPUSERVE
72164,1134

Contributing Editor:
Charles Moore

Staff Letterer:
Roxanne Starr

Production:
Nate Pride

British Liaison:
Malcolm Bourne

Graphic Designer:
Shinn Uehara

Associate Publisher:
James Pruett

Publisher:
Gary Reed

KILROY IS HERE ..... Page 1
written by Joe Pruett
illustrated by Kevin Landwehr

MR. MAMOULIAN ..... Page 7
written and illustrated by Brian Bolland

STRANGEHAVEN ..... Page 8
written and illustrated by Gary Spencer Millidge

GANGSTER STRIP DRAGWAY ..... Page 16
written and illustrated by Paul Pope

SHADOW ..... Page 19
written by Martin Conaghan
illustrated by Mike Perkins

A KILLER STORY ..... Page 25
written by Bill Jankowski and Mark Gallivan
illustrated by Bill Jankowski

WALKING THE PIZZA ..... Page 32
written by Paul Erickson
illustrated by Paul Fricke

CORPS CREADH ..... Page 34
written by Kevin Gunstone
illustrated by Jon Haward

CLASSICS DESECRATED ..... Page 40
written by Doug Wheeler
illustrated by David Gatzmer

Cover Art by Michael William Kaluta

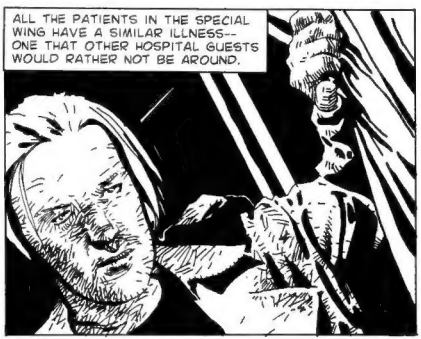
NEGATIVE BURN, vol. 1-no. 24. Published by Caliber Comics,11904 Farmington Rd., Livonia, MI 48150. NEGATIVE BURN ™ and © 1995 by Charles Moore, James Pruett, and Joe Pruett. KILROY IS HERE © 1995 by Joe Pruett, artwork © 1995 by Kevin Landwehr. MR. MAMOULIAN © 1995 by Brian Bolland. STRANGEHAVEN © 1995 by Gary Spencer Millidge. GANGSTER STRIP DRAGWAY © 1995 by Paul Pope. SHADOW © 1995 by Martin Conaghan and Mike Perkins. A KILLER STORY © 1995 by Bill Jankowski and Mark Gallivan. WALKING THE PIZZA © 1995 by Paul Erickson and Paul Fricke. CORPS CREADH © 1995 by Kevin Gunstone and Jon Haward. CLASSICS DESECRATED ™ and © 1995 by Doug Wheeler, artwork © 1995 by David Gatzmer. Cover Art © 1995 by Michael William Kaluta. Any similarity without satirical purpose to a person, name, character, or institution is a coincidence.

Subscriptions:

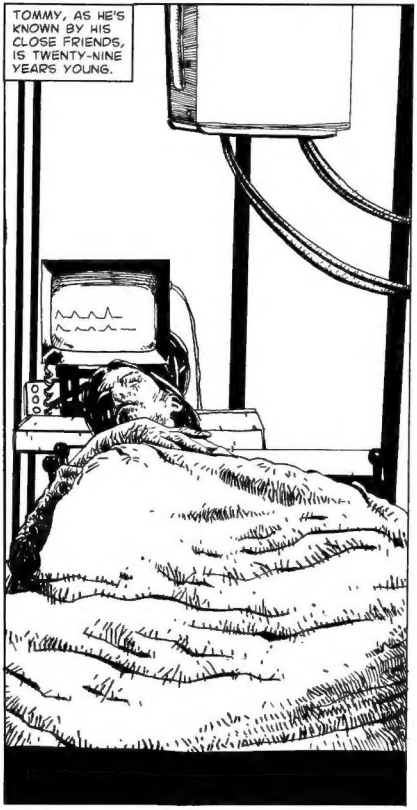
USA 6 issues $18.00 / 12 issues $36.00
Canada/Overseas 6 issues $21.00 / 12 issues $42.00
Please make check or money order
in U.S. dollars payable to **Joe Pruett.**
P.O.Box 893, Acworth, GA 30101

A COUPLE OF BLOCKS AWAY FROM THE BEACH IN MIAMI SITS A RATHER ORDINARY LOOKING HOSPITAL.
SPITAL
THERE'S A SPECIAL WING AT THIS HOSPITAL, NAMED AFTER SOME RICH GUY WHO DONATED A LOT OF MONEY SO THAT HE WOULD BE REMEMBERED FOR SOMETHING AFTER HE HAD PASSED AWAY.

I CAN'T RECALL HIS NAME AT THE MOMENT.


ALL THE PATIENTS IN THE SPECIAL WING HAVE A SIMILAR ILLNESS-- ONE THAT OTHER HOSPITAL GUESTS WOULD RATHER NOT BE AROUND.

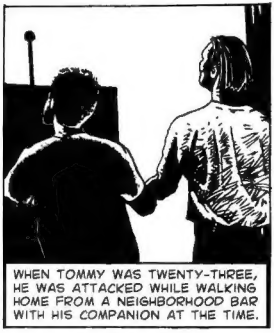
TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, THE GLOVES STAY ON.
ONE SUCH PATIENT IS THOMAS MARTINEZ.
HE'S DYING OF AIDS.
KILROY
~~WAS~~ IS HERE
In Remembrance
JOE PRUETT / CREATOR / WRITER
KEVIN LANDWEHR / ARTIST
ROXANNE STARR / LETTERER


TOMMY, AS HE'S KNOWN BY HIS CLOSE FRIENDS, IS TWENTY-NINE YEARS YOUNG.

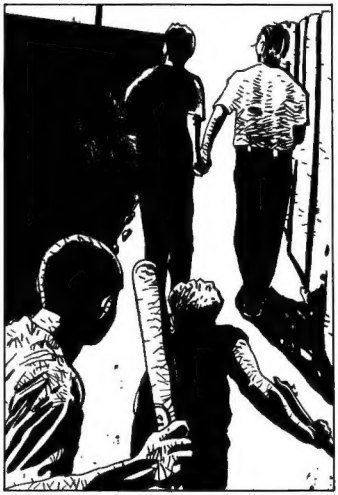
EVEN THOUGH YOU CAN'T SEE IT NOW, TOMMY HAS ALWAYS HAD A VIGOR FOR LIFE, AND HIS THIRST FOR LIFE OFTEN TIMES RUBBED OFF ON THOSE AROUND HIM.

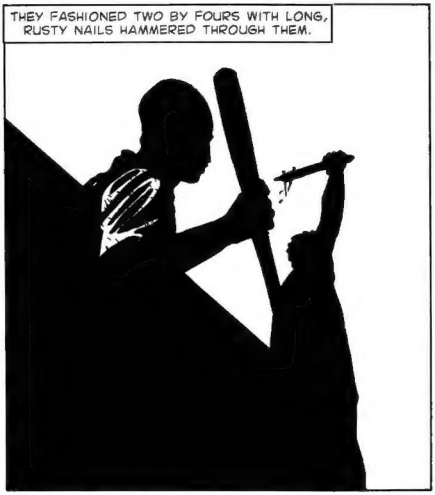
HE WAS EVERYONE'S FRIEND AND EVERYONE WHO KNEW HIM LOVED HIM.

IT'S THOSE WHO DIDN'T KNOW HIM WHO CAUSED HIM THE MOST PAIN.


WHEN TOMMY WAS TWENTY-THREE, HE WAS ATTACKED WHILE WALKING HOME FROM A NEIGHBORHOOD BAR WITH HIS COMPANION AT THE TIME.

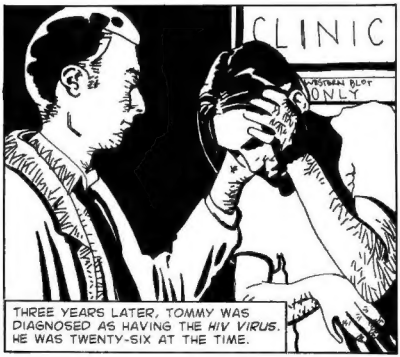
THEIR TEENAGED ASSAILANTS HAD PLANNED THE NIGHT'S ACTIVITY WELL IN ADVANCE.




THEY FASHIONED TWO BY FOURS WITH LONG, RUSTY NAILS HAMMERED THROUGH THEM.

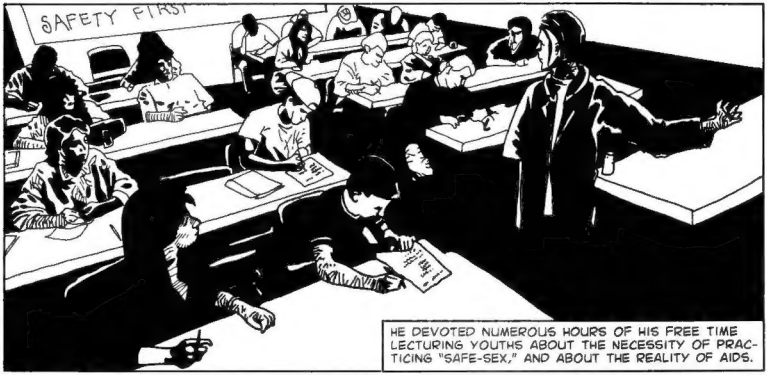
TOMMY SPENT THREE WEEKS IN INTENSIVE CARE.

HIS FRIEND WASN'T SO LUCKY. HE WAS PRONOUNCED DOA.
THE ASSAILANTS WERE NEVER APPREHENDED.



THREE YEARS LATER, TOMMY WAS DIAGNOSED AS HAVING THE *HIV VIRUS*. HE WAS TWENTY-SIX AT THE TIME.

AND...JUST LIKE TOMMY, HE KEPT ON LIVING WITHOUT WASTING A DAY.

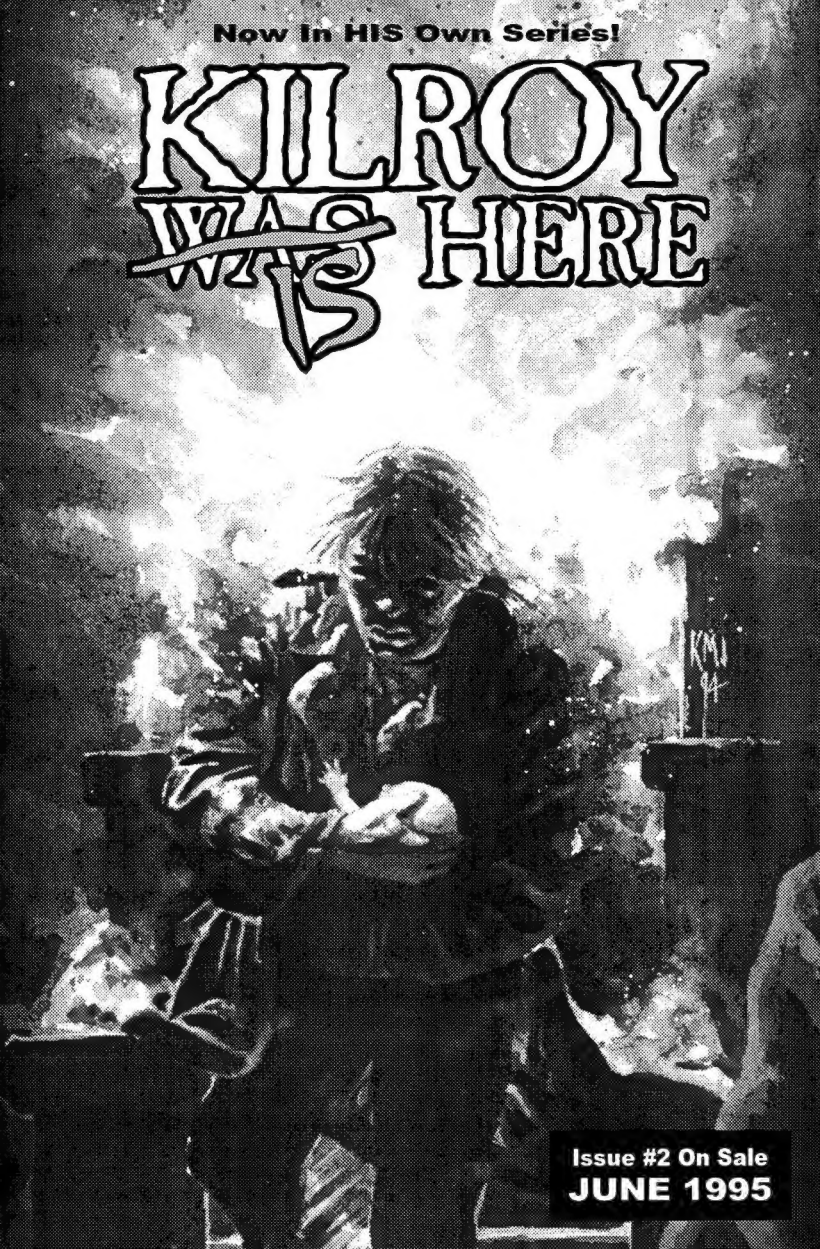


HE DEVOTED NUMEROUS HOURS OF HIS FREE TIME LECTURING YOUTHS ABOUT THE NECESSITY OF PRACTICING "SAFE-SEX," AND ABOUT THE REALITY OF AIDS.

HE REALLY CARED ABOUT PEOPLE.

"BE TRUE TO YOURSELF" AND "RESPECT OTHERS" WERE HIS FAVORITE SAYINGS, AND IT'S PRECISELY WHAT HE TAUGHT THOSE WHO WOULD LISTEN.

THANK YOU FOR COMING.
THANK YOU FOR OPENING SO MANY EYES.
·B·A·P·T·I·S·T·
HOSPI
END


Now In HIS Own Series!
KILROY
WAS HERE
Issue #2 On Sale
JUNE 1995

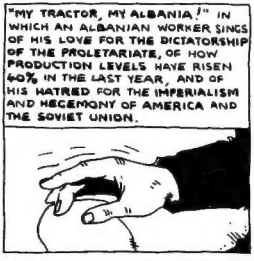
MR. MAMOULIAN
WINGS OF SONG

BOLLAND 4.3.88

I SIT BACK AND I AM TRANSPORTED ON WINGS OF SONG TO EXOTIC PLACES LIKE PARAGUAY, BORNEO LAPLAND, MONGOLIA, DALMATIA, TRANSYLVANIA.

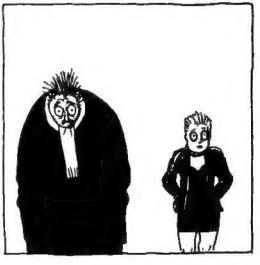
I'M PARTICULARLY FOND OF THE FOLK MUSIC OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: MOLDAVIA, MACEDONIA, BIELORUSSIA, BOSNIA, ARMENIA, FINLAND, BULGARIA AND SO ON.

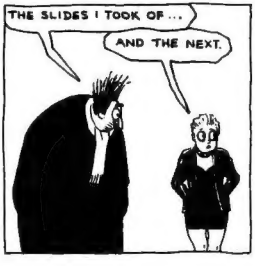
"MY OXEN AND CART ARE DEAR TO ME." IS A MOVING SONG IN WHICH A RUMANIAN PEASANT EXPRESSES HIS LOVE FOR HIS OXEN AND CART. WITHOUT THEM HE IS ALL ALONE IN THE WORLD.


"MY TRACTOR, MY ALBANIA!" IN WHICH AN ALBANIAN WORKER SINGS OF HIS LOVE FOR THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIATE, OF HOW PRODUCTION LEVELS HAVE RISEN 40% IN THE LAST YEAR, AND OF HIS HATRED FOR THE IMPERIALISM AND HEGEMONY OF AMERICA AND THE SOVIET UNION.

A VAST ARRAY OF INSTRUMENTS ARE TO BE HEARD ON THESE RECORDS SUCH AS THE SIBIZUI FROM KAZAKHSTAN, THE KANKLES FROM LITHUANIA, THE DOOL FROM GEORGIA, AND THE CHITCHEPCHINE FROM THE CAUCASUS.
THE DOUDA

I HAD THE PLEASURE OF SEEING VASSILY BOBBEROVSKI AND THE BOYS ALONG WITH THE LOVELY NATASHA ON A RECENT VISIT TO LENINGRAD.





STRANGEHAVEN
custard creams
IT'S OVER, BILLY.
©1995 · GARY SPENCER MILLIDGE ·
SUZIE... YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT. LET'S TRY AGAIN ... I PROMISE I'LL SPEND MORE TIME WITH YOU.
I LOVE YOU AND YOU STILL LOVE ME.
NO, BILLY.
NO MORE LAST CHANCES. WE'RE FINISHED.
I'M SEEING SOMEONE ELSE.
I'M SORRY.

YOU'RE...
SEEING...
NO!!
SUZIE? ARE YOU OKAY?
SUZIE?
jesus...

AND YOU'RE SURE THAT'S ALL THAT WAS TAKEN, MRS. McCREADIE?
AYE, AYE. JUST THE WEE PENDANT I BOUGHT FOR MY DAUGHTER.
THEY WERE AFTER MY BOX, YE KEN... BUT I HAD IT WITH ME, SAFE AND SOUND.
WELL, IT'S ALL VERY ODD. ... YOU'RE POSITIVE YOU HAVEN'T... ... ER... MISLAID THE ITEM?
OCH NO, SERGEANT. I MAY APPEAR TO BE A SILLY OLD COW AT TIMES...
... BUT I'M NOT DAFT!!
I LEFT IT THERE, BY THE STOVE, WAITING TO BE WRAPPED.
WELL, MRS M. I'M NOT SURE I CAN...
NOW THEN LADDIE, IT'S MY DAUGHTER'S BIRTHDAY PARTY TONIGHT AND I'D LIKE IT FOUND BY THEN. I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS VILLAGE IS COMING TO IF YOU CANNA EVEN LEAVE YOUR KITCHEN DOOR UNLOCKED!
... ER... WELL CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE STOLEN ITEM?

WELL NOW, LET'S THINK... IT WAS A SILVER TRIANGLE INSIDE A SILVER CIRCLE...
AYE, WITH THREE WEE CIRCLES INBETWEEN THE SPACES. COST ME A PRETTY PENNY, I CAN TELL YE...
SO THEN, SERGEANT, A CUP OF TEA BEFORE YE GO? AND SOME CUSTARD CREAMS?
NOW WHERE DID I PUT THE BISCUIT TIN...?
WATCH THOSE WINDOWS, KIDS...
WE DON'T WANT YOU-KNOW-WHO COMPLAINING AGAIN.
32
GOOD AFTERNOON, SERGEANT.
'AFTER-NOON, ADAM.
LOOK OUT!!
BLOODY WILDEGOS!! ORT'N LOCK'EM UP, YOU, SERGEANT...
CAS'N YUR YERSE'L THINK ZUMTIMES! KEEPIN' ME AWAKE ALL ARTERNOON.

NOISY LI'LL HELLERS!
ACTUALLY, EDDIE, I DID WANT TO ASK YOU IF YOU SAW ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS LAST NIGHT OR THIS MORNING. MRS McCREADIE RECKONS THAT SHE'S BEEN BURGLED.
YOU'VE GOT A GOOD VIEW OF THE GUEST HOUSE FROM UP THERE.
WAAL, I NIVER NOTICED NORT. LOAD OF OL' BLINEMARES... OL'SCOTS FULE GOTTEN CONFUDDLED I RECKON. 'APPEN SHE BIN ON THE WHISKY AGAIN.
NOW, LOOKEE 'ERE! YOUNG SUZIE TANG, PALKEN ALONG...
IT BE ONDAICENT, THE WAY SHE BIN CARRYIN' ON WITH THAT BOY CHAP BILLY BATES... WASSAMATTER WI'UR?
LOOKS LIKE SHE'S 'AD A PROPPER 'OL SCUMMER.
SUZIE? ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
I... I THINK SO. I SLIPPED AND HIT MY HEAD ON THE MOORS..
IT LOOKS PRETTY NASTY TO ME. WE'D BETTER GET THE DOC TO TAKE A LOOK AT IT.
IT'S A DEEP CUT, YOUNG LADY, AND YOU'RE GOJING TO HAVE A BIT OF A BUMP FOR A WHILE, BUT YOU'LL BE OKAY. I'LL GET ADAM TO TAKE A LOOK TO MAKE SURE THERE'S NO HAIRLINE FRACTURES.
UM... YES, KENT. I BELIEVE I SAW JOHN'S SON CHIPPY LEAVING MRS McCREADIES' EARLIER TODAY CARRYING A BAG OF TOOLS.
WELL, HE IS A CARPENTER...
AS FOR YOU SUZIE, TAKE TWO ASPIRIN AND GET SOME SLEEP.
THANKS, DOC.

I'LL PROBABLY HAVE TO BUILD UP THE SHELF TO JUST ABOVE THE BASIN AND BOX IT IN...
THE MINDTAP
THAT'S FINE, CHIPPY, REALLY.
... AND IF I MASTIC THE EDGES, THAT SHOULD STOP ALL THE SPLASHES DRIPPING DOWN THE BACK OF THE PEDESTAL...
... YOU DON'T WANT DAMP DOWN THERE...
WHATEVER IT TAKES, CHIPPY...
EXCUSE ME, GENTS; I'D JUST LIKE TO HAVE A WORD ABOUT A BURGLARY AT MRS. McCREADIES'.
I WAS ROUND THERE THIS MORNING! SHE SAID SHE'D LOST SOMETHING OR OTHER...
THE OLD BIDDY'S KITCHEN DOOR WAS STICKING AND I HAD TO SHAVE OFF AN EIGHTH.
I SEE. YOU DIDN'T NOTICE ANYTHING UNUSUAL?
NO, SIR.
CONFIDENTIALLY, OFFICER, I THINK YOU SHOULD ASK BILLY BATES ABOUT IT. HE'S BEEN IN HERE ALL AFTERNOON AND DRINKING HEAVILY.

IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN, OFFICER...
THANK YOU, MR. WEBB. SORRY TO DISTURB YOU GENTLEMEN. ENJOY YOUR EVENING.
BILLY, I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS IF I ...
NO. NO, IT'S OKAY !! I ADMIT IT ! I KILLED HER ... I'M SORRY. IT WAS AN ACCIDENT...
... I DIDN'T MEAN IT. I WAS SO ANGRY I ... I LOVED HER SO MUCH...
I NEVER MEANT TO KILL HER...
KILL WHO, BILLY?
... TO KILL...
... KILL SUZIE ...
BILLY... SHE'S NOT DEAD. SHE SAID THAT SHE SLIPPED WALKING ON THE MOORS... THE DOC SAYS SHE'LL BE FINE.
oh shit...
WILLIAM BATES. I'D LIKE YOU TO ACCOMPANY ME TO THE POLICE STATION ...

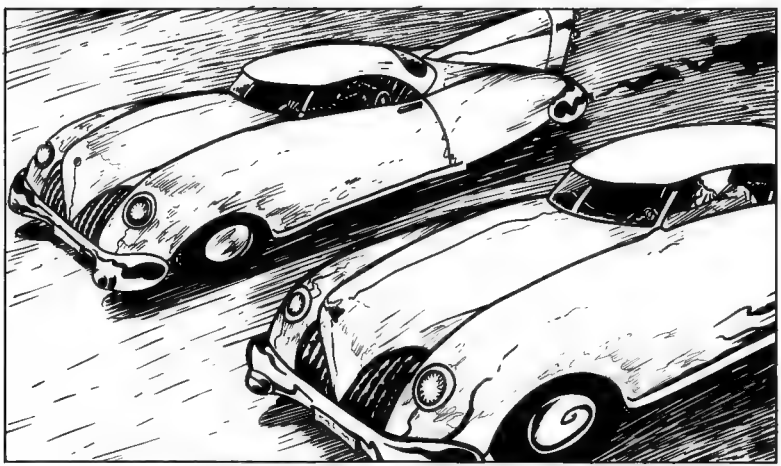
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, VICKI.
THANK YOU, SERGEANT. SO PLEASED YOU COULD MAKE IT.
MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME.
THANKS.
UH... I LIKE YOUR PENDANT.
IT'S LOVELY ISN'T IT?
MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT FROM MY TWO LITTLE HORRORS, BLESS 'EM.
DING DONG
THERE GOES THE DOORBELL AGAIN.
PLEASE EXCUSE ME.
HELLO AGAIN, KIDS... NOW I WONDER IF YOU CAN TELL ME EXACTLY WHERE...
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, SERGEANT...
... I'LL DEAL WITH THESE TWO.

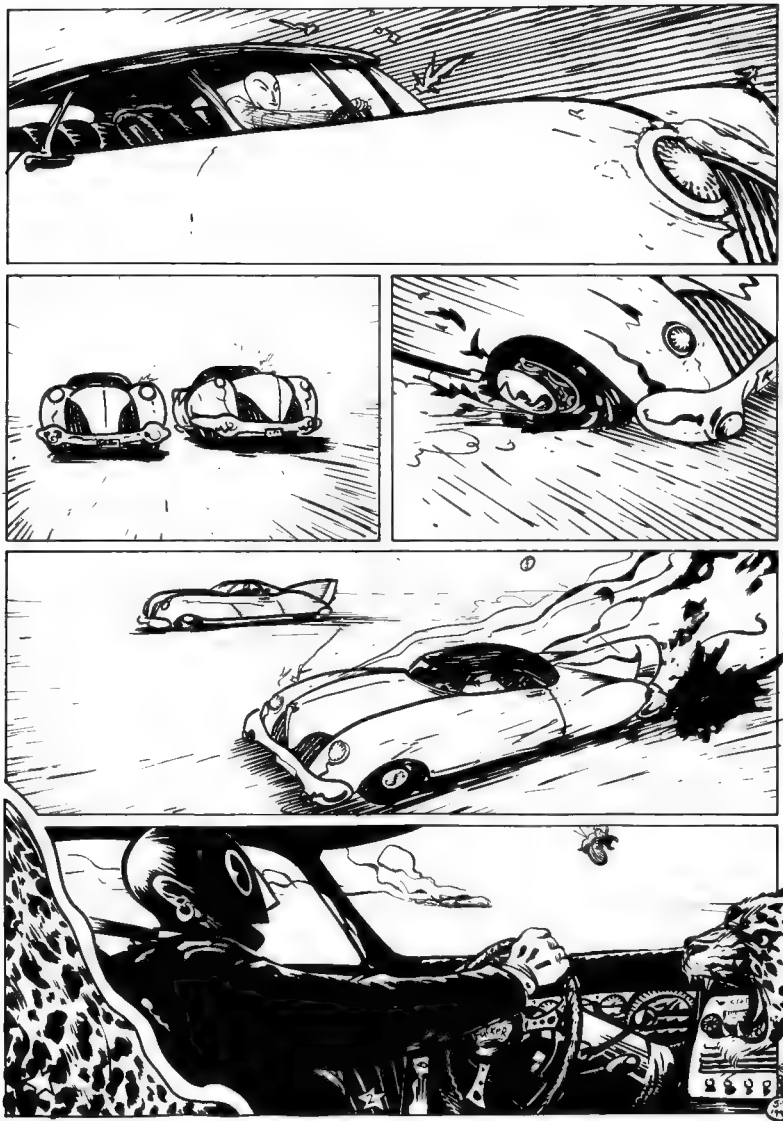
DON'T MISS THE SELF-PUBLISHED *STRANSEHAVEN #1* LATER THIS SUMMER.

"Martian Mega-Gangsters Enjoy Coca-Cola"

Gangster Strip DRAGWAY

the PERPETUAL Pancake Range





HAP
SOUP
Mega-Gangster #1
Mega-Gangster #2

SHADOW

WRITTEN BY MARTIN CONAGHAN ILLUSTRATED BY MIKE PERKINS

SOMETIMES, NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, YOU JUST CAN'T SLEEP.
THE LIGHT FROM THE STREET LAMPS SHINE THROUGH GAPS IN THE CURTAINS, CREATING HAPHAZARD CHESS-BOARD PATTERNS ALONG THE WALLS.
AND FACES FROM THE PAST EMERGE THROUGH THE SWIRLS AND CURLS ON THE WALLPAPER
SOME OF THOSE FACES YOU REMEMBER
SOME YOU NEVER FORGET.

IN THE SUMMER OF 1956, I WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD AND--MY BEST FRIEND WAS TOMMY TROWERS
LIKE ANY OTHER SEVEN YEAR OLD FRIENDS, TOMMY AND I WERE INSEPARABLE
THE AFTERNOONS WERE OCCUPIED WITH PASTIMES AND GAMES.
SUNSHINE AND FUN.
ONE GAME IN PARTICULAR WAS TAUGHT TO US BY TOMMY'S GRANDDAD
IT WAS CALLED "JUMP YOUR SHADOW."

HE CLAIMED, THAT IF YOU COULD JUMP OVER YOUR SHADOW, YOU WOULD BREAK FREE FROM IT, AND LIVE FOREVER.
OBVIOUSLY, THE NOTION OF IMMORTALITY HAD AN INTERESTING APPEAL TO A COUPLE OF SEVEN YEAR OLD BOYS.
AND WE SPENT HOUR AFTER HOUR JUMPING AROUND IN THE SUMMER SUN, DESPERATELY TRYING TO CLAIM OUR SLICE OF FOREVER.
AS YOU WOULD EXPECT, I SOON GREW TIRED AND ADMITTED DEFEAT
BUT TOMMY JUST KEPT ON JUMPING

UNDER THE STREET LAMPS, INTO THE DARK HOURS.
LONG AFTER HIS MUM HAD CALLED HIM IN FOR THE NIGHT.
BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS --KEEPING ME AWAKE.
I REMEMBER WATCHING HIM FROM MY BEDROOM WINDOW AS HE HOPPED AND SKIPPED IN THE SODIUM LIGHT.
THE LAST TIME I EVER SAW LITTLE TOMMY, HE WAS RUNNING ALONG THE STREET INTO THE DARKNESS.

NO ONE EVER SAW TOMMY AGAIN
HAVE YOU SEEN ME?
THE POLICE ASKED ME LOTS OF QUESTIONS--WHERE TOMMY WAS THAT NIGHT, WHAT HE HAD SAID --IF HE HAD SPOKEN TO ANYONE.
BUT I NEVER TOLD THEM WHAT WE HAD BEEN DOING, OR THAT I SAW TOMMY RUN OFF THAT NIGHT.
AND TO THIS DAY, LITTLE TOMMY HAS NEVER BEEN FOUND.
SOME MONTHS LATER, I WAS WALKING HOME FROM SCHOOL IN THE SEMI-DARK WINTER COLD--WHEN I ENCOUNTERED SOMETHING I WILL NEVER FORGET FOR AS LONG AS I LIVE.
WHERE ISSS HEEE? YOU KNOWW WHERE HE ISSSS...

I WAS MUCH TOO FRIGHTENED TO EVER SPEAK OF WHAT I SAW.
WONDERING WHAT BECAME OF LITTLE TOMMY.
AND MANY A NIGHT SINCE, I HAVE LAIN AWAKE, PLAYING THE INCIDENT OVER IN MY MIND--TRYING TO FIGURE OUT EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS
END

A KILLER STORY
NOW, ISN'T THIS BETTER THAN DINNER AND A MOVIE?
BURP!
WELL, IT SURE IS CHEAPER! AIN'T IT, ROCKEFELLER?
BEAVER PARK
PLEASE EXTINGUISH ALL FIRES
THIS CAR THING IS GETTIN' KINDA OLD Y' KNOW?...
WHY DON'T YOU GET A JOB AND SPRING FOR AN APARTMENT.
WHAT? ARE YOU CRAZY?
UMPH!
WHAT COULD BE MORE ROMANTIC...
OUCH!
...THAN A MOONLIT NIGHT...
URK!
... IN A BEAUTIFUL AUTOMOBI...
OW!
...NOW QUIT YOUR GRINNIN' AND DROP THAT LINEN!
WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM FOR A LATE BREAKING NEWS STORY...
CONVICTED SERIAL KILLER, MATTHEW AXLEROD, HAS JUST ESCAPED FROM THE BEAVER COUNTY MAXIMUM SECURITY PENITENTIARY...
OH MY GOD!

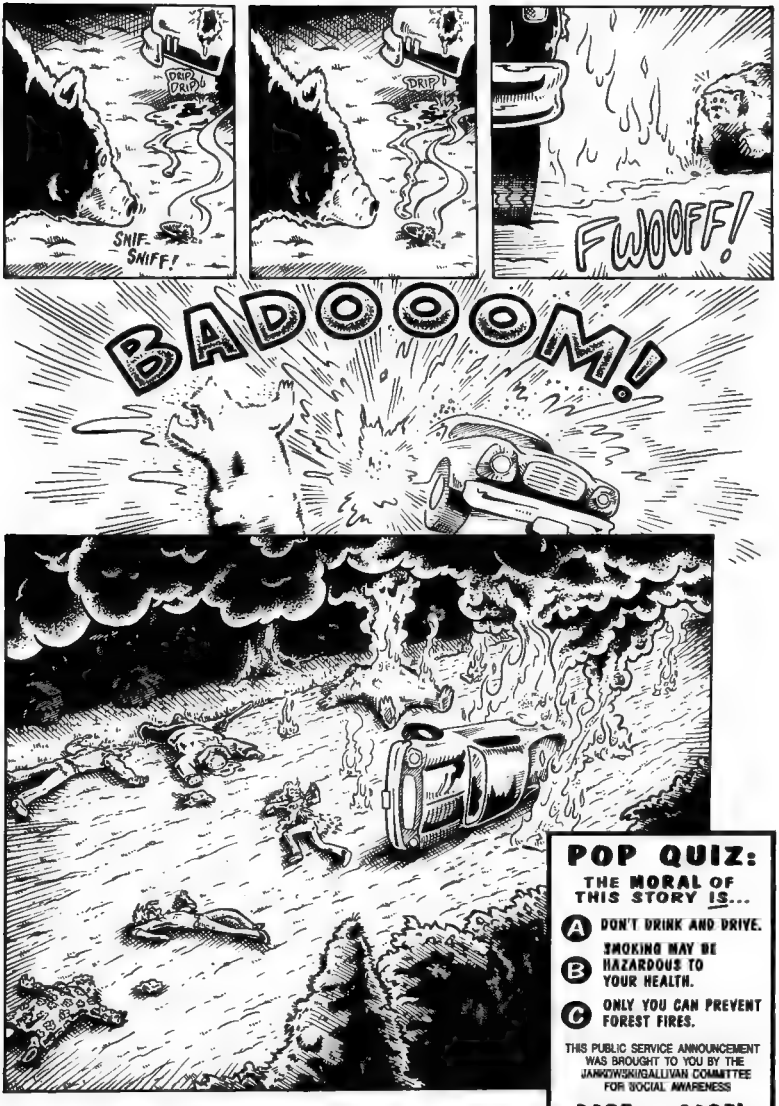
THE NEWSPAPERS PENNED HIM "MATTY THE HOOK" FOR THE PROSTHETIC DEVICE WHERE HIS LEFT HAND USED TO BE...
THAT'S ONLY A COUPLE MILES FROM HERE, RICKEY!
... WHICH HE USED TO MUTILATE HIS TWENTY-ONE HIGH-SCHOOL AGE VICTIMS!
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT, LUCY...
LET'S FINISH THESE STEWS AT MY MOM'S HOUSE!
VRROOM!
SCRREEEECHH!!
I SWEAR I'LL JUST POOP IF I FIND A HOOK HANGING FROM THIS DOOR HANDLE!
Um, RICKEY...
WHAT'S THAT SMELL?
WHAT?
Oh... Uh... SKUNK!!
YEAH! THAT'S IT! WE MUSTA HIT A SKUNK!
AAAAAHH!
JEEZUZ!
IT'S "MATTY THE HOOK"!!
RUN HIM DOWN!

VVVRRROOOM!
WHUMP!
RLUMP!
RRRRRRTT!
OH, RICKEY!
PLEASE... DON'T GET OUT OF THE CAR!
DON'T WORRY, I THINK HE'S...
OH, GOD.
IT'S JUST AN OLD HOE!!
DON'T BE RUDE!
IT'S OLD LADY SKINNER, "THE MIDNIGHT GARDENER"!
I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THE LADY...
... IT'S WHAT SHE'S HOLDING! IT'S JUST A LITTLE GARDENING HOE!!
WE ARE IN BIG TROUBLE, LUCY!!

"IT'S MATTY THE HOOK!"
"RUN HIM DOWN!"
GOOD CALL, "DEAD-EYE"!
OH, GAWD!
LEM'ME SEE THAT, RICKEY.
LEGGO, YA GOOFY BROAD!
THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT Y'KNOW!
FINE.
YOU FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO THEN, MR. MACHO!
SPLUT!
HK!
GGGLARG!
OH, NOW LOOK...
RICKEY, HOW DID I GET BLOOD ALL OVER MY BLOUSE?
..RICKEY?
... GGRRGLLL...
RICKEY!
HEY, WHAT THE HELL IS...
... SWEET JESUS McCOY
... IT'S A HALF-DRESSED, SORORITY PSYCHO-BITCH!

Y-YOU KILLED MIZZUS SKINNER!
..AND WHAT DID YOU DO TO THAT POOR...
O.K., MISSY! YOU STAY RIGHT THERE 'TIL I FIGGER OUT HOW TO CALL THE POLICE!
OH, NO!!
PLEASE, WAIT!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND!!
LUNGE!
I SAID DON'T MOVE!!
HURGH!
FOOM!
PLAT
BLAM!
FRICKIN' A!
IF I HADN'T BEEN OUT LOOKIN' FOR THAT GRIZZL...
SHUNK!
POOT
*
SHLOF!
HM HM HMMM-
HEH HEH-HEHEE
HAAAA!!!

HUH-HUH!
HEE HEE HERR!
HMMMMM!
GIGGLE!
SNORT!
CHUCKLE!
HMMM?
GGRRRRAAAARRR!!
HWAAAA!!
CHLOMP!
SHHRRIP!
MUNCH
MUNCH
SLURP
SLOP
SHLUP...



POP QUIZ:

THE MORAL OF THIS STORY IS...

- **A** DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE.
- **B** SMOKING MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH.
- **C** ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT FOREST FIRES.

THIS PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE JANKOWSKI/GALLIVAN COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL AWARENESS

DARE TO CARE!

the END

WALKING THE PIZZA

Written by PAUL ERICKSON Drawn by PAUL FRICKE

THE PEOPLE HE MEETS AS HE WALKS DOWN THE STREET SEE A MAN WITH A PIZZA AND SAY...
HE WALKS WITH PIZZA! DON'T CROSS THE STREET TO AVOID HIM. HE ISN'T DANGEROUS...
HE'S GOT A PIZZA!
...ISN'T ANGRY...
...HE'S HAPPY TONIGHT!

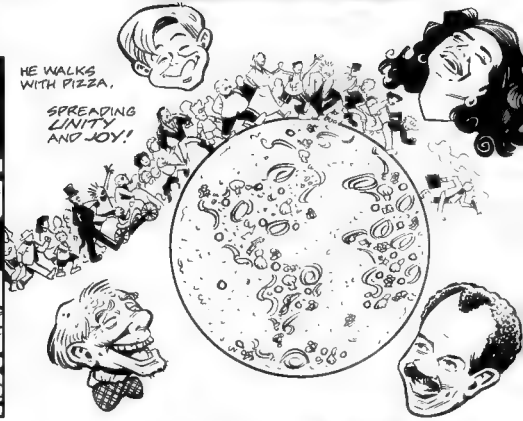
TALK TO A STRANGER, BREAK THE ICE, DISCUSS PIZZA:
WHAT'S ON IT?
DO YOU LIKE ANCHOVIES?
BOB'S PIZZA

HE WALKS WITH PIZZA...

...IT SMELLS SO GOOD AS HE WALKS PAST

HE ISN'T DRIVING, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT FOR A WALK!

PIZZA WOULD TASTE GOOD TONIGHT!


HE WALKS WITH PIZZA,
SPREADING UNITY AND JOY!

HOT GOSPEL WITH SAUSAGE FOR PICK-UP!

HE NEEDS NO DELIVERY
FIN

CORPS CREADH
THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS...
I ONCE READ IN ONE OF MY GRANDFATHER'S BOOKS, THAT IF YOU WANT TO GET REVENGE ON SOMEONE, YOU HAD TO CALL ON THE DEVIL.
YOU HAVE TO GO TO A CHURCH AT MIDNIGHT...
AND RUN AROUND IT...

ONE...
WIDDERSHINS!
TWO...
WIDDERSHINS!
THREE...
WIDDERSHINS!
TIMES...AND THEN YOU CAN MAKE YOUR REQUEST.
AAH!

THERE'S NO NEED TO BE SURPRISED, MATTHEW, AFTER ALL, YOU DID CALL ME DIDN'T YOU?...AND HERE I AM... TELL ME, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
YOU KNOW MY NAME?
OF *COURSE!* I KNOW THE NAMES OF ALL THE LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS. NOW ONCE AGAIN, HOW CAN I HELP YOU?
MY NEW TOY... THE ONE MY MUM BOUGHT FOR ME... WELL, ADAM McCALLUM STOLE IT FROM ME AND WON'T GIVE IT BACK. I WANT TO GET HIM.
ARE YOU *SURE?*
YES, I AM. I WANT TO MAKE HIM *PAY.*
VERY WELL...

WHEN YOU GO TO SCHOOL TOMORROW CUT OFF A LOCK OF HIS HAIR.
GOT YOU!
CHOP!
UHNN
TAKE IT TO THE RIVER AND USE THE MUD FROM THE BANK TO MAKE A DOLL OF HIM.

...PUT THE HAIR IN THE MIDDLE...
AND PLACE IT IN THE RIVER.
HELLO, MUM.
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.
WHAT TIME DO YOU CALL THIS? AND JUST LOOK AT THE STATE OF YOU. WHERE ON EARTH HAVE YOU BEEN TO ALL THIS TIME?
SORRY.

ANYWAY...I FOUND SOMETHING OF YOURS TODAY. THIS WAS OUTSIDE.
YOU REALLY SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL WITH YOUR THINGS. I HATE TO SEE THEM SPOILT.
...AND I CAN ASSURE YOU, HE WILL *NEVER* TROUBLE YOU AGAIN.
THE END

KEVIN GUNSTONE/WRITER *JON HAWARD*/ARTIST *ROXANNE STARR*/LETTERER ©1995

CLASSICS DESECRATED™

MOTHER GOOSED PRESENTS:

"BEGGARS ARE COME TO TOWN"

DEFILED BY DOUG WHEELER & DAVE GATZMER

Winner of the 1993 Comic Creators Guild Award for "Best Small Press/ Self-Published Title."

Written and Illustrated by

NABIEL KANAN

September 1995

CALIBER COMICS

CALIBER COMICS

CHECKLIST

MAY / JUNE 1995

A.K.A. GOLDFISH: Queen

In Queen, the focus is on the female lead, Lauren B'Call. She was once Goldfish's greatest love and partner in crime, but now they are bitter adversaries. What connects her to Goldfish after all this time? From creator Brian Micheal Bendis. $2.95

BECK AND CAUL ANNUAL

A special 48 page one year anniversary issue of Beck and Caul Investigations features a turning point on the path to Beck and Caul's destiny. $3.50

CALIBER SPOTLIGHT SPECIAL

ALL NEW stories from Kabuki, Oz, A.K.A. Goldfish and Kilroy. Plus an advanced preview of Raven Chronicles, The Underside, Inferno and The Searchers! 80 pages. $2.95

KABUKI: Circle of Blood #3

The female agents of Noh are ordered to hunt down a rogue Kabuki and retrieve her, dead or alive. Written and illustrated by David Mack. Don't miss this runaway hit of 1995. $2.95

NEGATIVE BURN #23

Included in this issue, Russ Cooper and Wade von Grawbadger's cover feature of Inosion, Brian Bolland's Mr. Mamoulian, Phillip Hester's The Creep and Matthew Smith's You Can Never Go Back, plus more. $2.95

OZ #8

Scarecrow, Lion, Tin Man, Kevin, Peter, and Max fight off the fury of the Nome Hordes, while the Oz Freedom fighters set out to free Ozma, the true ruler of Oz. $2.95

RENFIELD #5

With Lucy dead, Dracula sets his sights on Mina, the wife of Jonathan Harker, and Renfield must decide between his human soul and immortality. $2.95

WALK THROUGH OCTOBER #1

A modern mythology of creation, destruction and the need for fantasy, by newcomer Matthew Smith. $2.95

KILROY IS HERE #2

Kilroy must risk exposing himself to the world when an infant is trapped in a burning building, and he's the only one who can save the child. By Joe Pruett and Ken Meyer Jr. $2.95

NEGATIVE BURN #24

This issue begins with a stunning cover by Michael Wm. Kaluta! Featured stories include Gangster Strip Dragway by Paul Pope; A Killer Story by Bill Jankowski and Mark Gallivan; and a new Kilroy Is Here story by Joe Pruett and Kevin Landwehr. $2.95

NOWHERESVILLE #1

The scene is cool but the passions are white-hot in this explosive tale of murder, obsession and revenge set in the turbulent world of the Beatniks. Don't be square, dad, dig Nowheresville! From the writer/artist team of Mark Ricketts, Rick Conrad and Alain Sherter. $2.95

RETURN OF HAPPY THE CLOWN #2

Enter the Ninja...and all hell breaks loose. Gina, Happy's girlfriend, is captured by agents of the CID and turned over to the demonic ninja hit squad known as "the Oni" to be used as bait for Happy. By Gary Francis and Troy Boyte. $2.95

OZ #9

The Oz Freedom Fighters are attacked by giant spiders in the passages below the Emerald City. Meanwhile, Peter, trapped in the Nome Kings dungeon, meets the true ruler of the Emerald City, Ozma the Queen! Written by Ralph Griffith and Stuart Kerr with art by Bill Bryan. $2.95

OZ Graphic Novel #1

Collecting the first five issues. This trade covers the arrival of Kevin, Peter and Mary to the land of OZ, through the dispelling of the magic enthralling Scarecrow, Tin Man and Lion, and the preparation for the battle against the Nome King. By Griffith, Kerr and Bryan. 176 pages. $14.95

SAVAGE HENRY: Headstrong #3

It's Savage Henriette?! The Bulldaggers are having a hard time accepting Henry as a girl. Written and illustrated by Matt Howarth. $2.95

Check your local retailer first,
but if you have difficulties locating CALIBER titles call
1-800-346-8940 for order information

it's a town without pity...

strictly

NOWHERESVILLE

JUNE 1995

BACK ISSUES FOR SALE

BACK ISSUES

NEGATIVE BURN

Issue #	
No. 1, 8	$5.00 each
No. 2	$4.00
No. 3	$8.00
No. 4-7, 9-12, 14-up	$2.95 each
No. 13	$3.95
Best of Year 1 (Trade paperback)	$9.95

SPIN-OFFS AND RELATED TITLES

BLACK MIST

No. 1-4 From James Pruett and Avido Khahaifa. This is the saga of a pained man involved in a deluded frantic struggle to regain his sanity during World War I. Issue two guest-stars KILROY. Covers by Ken Meyer Jr. 32 pages. . . . . $2.95 each

BONESHAKER

No. 1 A collection of Phillip Hester's popular serial that ran in the pages of NEGATIVE BURN. 64 pages $3.50

CALIBRATIONS

No. 1 Features the very first appearance of KILROY by Joe Pruett and Bil Ruth. Contributors include Brent Truax, Patrick Zircher, Vince Locke, Kyle Garrett, and Guy Davis. 48 pages. VERY LIMITED SUPPLY. . . . $10.00

DOMINIQUE

Leaping from the pages of DARK HORSE PRESENTS and NEGATIVE BURN, Charles and Lisa Moore's popular character, DOMINIQUE, now stars in her own series of one-shots. 32 pages. Choices are FAMILY MATTERS, WHITE KNUCKLE DRIVE, PROTECT AND SERVE and KILLZONE. . . . . $2.95 each

KILROY IS HERE

No. 0 Features a new lead story by creator Joe Pruett and artist Ken Meyer Jr., plus the hard to find first appearance from CALIBRATIONS. Cover art by Brain Bolland! 32 pages. $2.95

KILROY: REVELATIONS

No. 1 One-shot leading into the new series by Joe Pruett, Guy Burwell, and Ray Snyder. Bonus gallery section featuring Guy Davis, Vince Locke, Terry Moore, Phillip Hester, Ken Meyer Jr., and Paul Pope. 32 pages. . $2.95

BACK ISSUES FOR SALE

KILROY: THE SHORT STORIES

No. 1 A collection of all the previous Kilroy short stories from 1992-94 that have appeared in CALIBRATIONS, NEGATIVE BURN, and HIGH CALIBER. 48 pages. $2.95

KILROY IS HERE

No. 1-up The beginning point of the brand new, bi-monthly series by creator Joe Pruett and artist Ken Meyer Jr. Each issue also continues a gallery section of some of today's finest artists' (Tony Harris, Craig Hamilton, Steve Rude, etc.) interpretation of Kilroy. Painted covers by Ken Meyer Jr. 32 pages. . . . . $2.95 each

THE APPARITION: ABANDONED

No. 1 A one shot tale of spiritual abandonment by creator / writer James Pruett and fully painted by Michael Gaydos. Printed in Caliber's prestige format. 48 pages. $3.95

CALIBER SPOTLIGHT

No. 1 Featuring ALL NEW stories of Caliber's most popular series (KABUKI, AKA GOLDFISH, KILROY, and OZ), along with special preview stories of the upcoming NEW WORLD titles (RAVEN CHRONICLES, THE SEARCHERS, and INFERNO). Featuring the talents of David Mack, Craig Brasfield, Michael Gaydos, Nathan Massengill, Joe Pruett, Ken Meyer Jr., Brian Bendis, and many more! Also, indepth articles and interviews with Caliber creators discussing future plans and projects. 80 pages! $2.95

Mail orders to:

JOE PRUETT

PO BOX 893

ACWORTH, GA 30101

Please enclose a check or money order payable to Joe Pruett. US FUNDS ONLY!

SHIPPING INFORMATION

If your order is...

Under $10.00	Add $2.00
$10.01 to $25.00	Add $3.50
$25.01 to $75.00	Add $5.00
over $75.00	FREE

Send letters to:
Joe Pruett
P.O. Box 893,
Acworth, GA 30101

Craig T. Powell
3579 San Carlos Dr.
Salt Lake City, UT 84119-5623

Dear Joe,

I wanted to take a few minutes and compliment you on your fine work with NEGATIVE BURN. I've been 'burning' with you since issue #1. I was originally drawn to your book by the big name creators (Bob Burden, Brian Bolland, Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman, etc.). It was good to see some their work we might not have ever seen. I've also been impressed with some of the lesser known creators.

Now I don't necessarily enjoy all the stories or art, but on the whole this is a terrific collection of works. I'm partial to the self-contained story; if it is serialized, I have to be pretty impressed to want to keep up with it—and there have been a few like that.

It's neat to see that these type of stories are finding a home. There's so much crap in the comics field, it's a genuine pleasure to come across something like NEGATIVE BURN.

I wish you continued success in this endeavor.

Thanks for the honest and heartfelt letter, Craig. Throwing the "littler known" guys in with the "big names" is an obvious ploy to get people to give the little guys a chance, and it seems to be working! If you buy the comic for the established talent but find that you enjoy the new talent's work then we're all winning.

Greg Greene
via Internet

Joe,

I just wanted to drop you a note saying how much I enjoyed NEGATIVE BURN. Unfortunately, I possess neither the time nor the skill to approximate full human emotion with mere words, but I liked the book anyway. This collection proves that your anthology is a winner, a source for some of the uncontested best talent in the medium. Some memorable favorites:

"Eulogy to Marx": great use of contrast between word and picture, which is EXACTLY what comics can be used for. It was pointed enough to be ironic, but short enough that it didn't feel heavy-handed. Also, Paul's story in NB #20 ("Portrait of A Girl With An Unpronounceable Name") about meeting the chap in France who told him the story of his girlfriend: it had an atmosphere that made me truly interested--captured me, I suppose—even if I didn't get his point (assuming he had one).

"We Can Get Them For You Wholesale": The original story is quite cute in a nasty sort of way, kind of like when the Smurfs all got that purple sickness and they ran around biting and infected one another, screeching "Gnap!", until there was only one sane smurf left, the lone survivor surrounded by his gnashing, drooling tribe.... It's a nice story, and I'm glad you adapted it.

"The Apparition": strange way to narrate a story, but I need to read more of this strip. "Then there's the matter of meeting the Galilean" was a great line, well-timed, made a nice "punchline", if you will. [Let me take this opportunity to say that your mixture of veiled, or unveiled, Christian stories along with secular or even brutal stories WORKS. I might even say that it's pretty darn brave of you to try this approach. I don't mind so much seeing those vulgar, chicken-throwing cartoons twerps if they're in the same issue with a woman on death row who confronts God and Satan. I don't even mind if God and Satan are pictured as WOMEN!! And I'm conservative, man. By the way, Dominique is my favorite strip/title you guys put out so far. "Dominique: Strength" is worthy of critical interpretation, in the *college* sense of the word.] One last word on Apparition. The painted black and white art is very eye-catching, especially next to unpainted stuff.

All the Phillip Hester stuff was really neat, and his final story, the Mutilated Puppy Blues strip was HORRID. Very, very effective. That was a total surprise. Bravo to Phil.

(Lest I forget) "Kilroy Is Here." I liked this episode best of all the ones I've read. Unfortunately, that only includes two episodes. The other was the story of the punk who breaks in on the old man. I found the black man's story a little less heavy-handed: (paraphrasing) "I just wanted to see if anyone remembered" is not as didactic as "Why do the wicked always prey on the weak, the helpless?" Also, since Kilroy takes its cue from superheroism—in which a powerful being enters the theatre of the normal world and causes change—I'm glad you make his appearance unobtrusive, almost inconspicuous. In fact, the black man's story can almost be told without Kilroy. Almost.

Well, I've burdened you with enough criticism. I'll leave it at saying that YEAR ONE made me wish I had subscribed to NEGATIVE BURN since its inception, so I wouldn't have to hunt down expensive and hard-to-find back issues. You have my whole-hearted congratulations on your success with this book.

Again, my thanks.

Glad you liked the collection, Greg. The purpose of the collection is to allow new readers a chance to sample parts of the earliest issues without having to hunt all those hard-to-find issues down. It seems to have worked for you.

Greg Greene
via Internet

Dear Joe,

I spotted NB #22 this weekend and nabbed it. "Nice Moebius-style cover," I thought. I was surprised to see the nice Moebius credit inside, but I guess I shouldn't have been, considering all the other world-class comicbook dignitaries you've hosted.

Kanan's "Exit" was a change from the typical American feel of story-telling. High in character, low in plot, it was a delicious part of this complete Negative Breakfast. It was subtle and focused on dialogue, with lots of talking heads—something I've come to expect from British writing. The drawings were a pleasure to look at, graceful and styled, no hairs out of place, etc. The best part was, obviously, the knife panels, that nasty little trick of Nabiel's. It was clever, and it showed the merits of sequential art without bombast. The story didn't leave me with too strong an impression, however: I can't remember any of the characters' names, and though I caught the emotional gist of the strip, it won't haunt me for days or weeks. Still, I enjoyed it and would like to see more.

"Poacher" was the boiled egg of the book: high in plot, low in character development, and very tasty. Great wording trick. I can't think of any other medium in which this technique would work. In a film, the voice would have to give any the true hunter's identity; in prose you'd lose the visuals, so obviously it wouldn't work. I've admired all of Phillip Hester's art that I've seen so far, and Jim Frier's script made me read it through a second time. Good American story-telling where O. Henry meets Arnold Schwartzeneggar.

"Lost Paradise" was a fine piece. The architecture was like Moebius' and the human was along the lines of the highly styled Image house. The only problem was that it ended too soon. I was still waiting for the guardian troll to step into the door frame when I was hit with "Donor". Speaking of which...

My first reaction was, "This is way too similar to 'The Body Snatchers' in issue 13." I quickly changed my mind. I preferred this story to "Body Snatchers" for two reasons. One, I like comics. Illustrated prose tends to put me off. Second, the "victim" here has power over his captors, providing the reader with a real conflict, or at least a good threat. "Snatchers" was just depressing.

My thanks for another good issue. I look forward to the next.

If you liked Nabiel's short EXIT piece in this issue (he also had one back in NEGATIVE BURN #12) then be sure to pick up issue #1 of his all-new EXIT series beginning this September from Caliber Comics—edited by yours truly. I'm pretty sure that Nabiel has all of the previously self-published EXIT issues in stock (issues #1-8, except #3 is sold out), so drop him a check for $2.75 per issue and throw in a few dollars for postage. His address is Taxi Comics, 19 Cornhill, Allestree, Derby, DE 22 2GG, United Kingdom. Tell him Joe sent you.

Also, Jim Frier (the writer of the "Poacher" story you liked so much) will be teaming up with Mark Badger (THE MASK, BATMAN) on a story for NEGATIVE BURN later this year that will lead into an upcoming regular series from Caliber, probably after the first of the year. Jim is definitely a talent to watch out for in the future. I've also got two additional shorts from Jim scheduled for NB before the end of the year—one by Scottish artist, David Hill, (be sure to check out his GABRIEL one-shot with Jim Alexander next month) and one by HAWKMAN artist Tim Holtrop.

DONOR was originally slated for TABOO before it's demise (it's since been announced that two issues will be coming out from Kitchen Sink before too long), TABOO's lost is our gain.

Greg Connell
237 Van Antwerp
Marquette, MI 49855

Dear Mr. Pruett,

Last week I picked up my first issue of NEGATIVE BURN. I found it refreshing to see such a volume of work in publication. Congratulations on your efforts.

I was wondering how you handle submissions. If you could send me some submissions guidelines, that would help me a great deal.

Thanks for your time and your quality work.

I don't really have guidelines. Here are some do's and don'ts though. I generally don't match up artists and writers. I will on occasion, but that's the exception to the rule. If you want to submit something to me, I prefer that you already have an artist in mind. Also, if you do have an artist in mind, please send me some samples with you synopsis. As far as writers go, I prefer a brief plot or synopsis for the story submitted. If I like the idea, than I'll ask for a script. To get the quickest answer, simply submit a story that's already illustrated and written. It doesn't have to be lettered, but if you have a good letterer that's fine.

I don't know if this helps, but I hope it does in some way. To let you know, I presently have about a year and a half of material filled for NEGATIVE BURN. If you can wait that long, then I'll look your stuff over. Oh yeah, please (as you did this time) always include a SASE.

For those of you who haven't read my submissions guidelines before (originally printed in NB #14) I'll run it again this issue, so you can see what I do and don't like.

For those of you who may have missed this when it originally ran in NB #14 I thought I'd run it again.

new sub mis sions guide lines

Okay, I get asked enough about the guidelines for submissions to NEGATIVE BURN so I guess it's about time I just sit down at my computer terminal and type up what requirements I have. First of all, I am booked up for about a year and a half to two years on NEGATIVE BURN. That's right, you read correctly. I have through issue no. 34 (April 1996) scheduled and still have plenty of stories left in inventory. That's not to say I won't take a submission, it just has to be really good and original to catch my attention. If after reading the above couple of sentences you still think you have something that's going to have me begging for your permission to print your story in NEGATIVE BURN then let's get to the nitty-gritty.

From this point forth, I WILL NOT reply to a submission that does not include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. I've always prided myself that I will take the time to answer each and every submission I receive with a personal reply, even when I've had to pay for the envelopes and stamps to do so. No more. I simply have way too many submissions to sort through and read that I will no longer foot the bill. So, please, if you expect a reply from me, enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND FULL SCRIPTS for me to read, unless I've personally asked for you to do so. I DO NOT match up writers and artists. I simply don't have the time. If you're a writer and you want to submit a story to me, I suggest that you first find a TALENTED artist. What I mean by "talented" is I expect the artist to be of professional quality. Be honest and look at the artist's work and ask yourself, "would I publish his/her work and expect to make any money from it?" If you're honest with yourself then you'll learn to increase your standards. When you find your talented artist have him/her draw a couple of pages of sequential art (not pin-ups, but panel to panel artwork)–I have to see if the artist can tell a story. This is true for ANY proposal you ever do. Editors and publishers don't want to see pin-up pages, they want to see the story. If you have your artist and your story then you have two choices to make before you submit to NEGATIVE BURN. You can either go ahead and finish the story and submit your proposal as a finished piece (this gets the quickest reaction) or you send the sample art pages with a one-two page plot of the proposed short story–NO FULL SCRIPTS. If you send a full script then it may take me months to get to it. I always put scripts at the bottom of the submissions pile to "read later." If I like the story and the art then I'll get in touch with you and tell you to send me a full script to look over.

If you are an artist and you send me art samples without a story synopsis along with it then don't expect a reply–that's not to mean I won't reply to you, just don't expect it. As I said, I don't match up artists and writers. I will keep art samples sent to me on file for future reference in the event that I need an artist for some project or if a writer or editor friend of mine needs an artist for a particular story or series, I'll go through my files and see if I can find someone that would suit their needs.

Also, don't send me proposals for a mini-series of an ongoing series. I edit an anthology comic book which means I use short stories, nothing else. You'd be surprised how many ongoing series proposals I get. If you have a mini-series or ongoing series proposal don't send it to me, send it to Caliber Press. I am not an employee of Caliber Press. I am a freelance editor and writer. Caliber Press' address is: Submissions Editor, 11904 Farmington Rd, Livonia, MI 48150.

Remember that when you submit something to NEGATIVE BURN that I don't like submissions. I'd rather do just about anything else than review submissions, but it's part of being an editor. It's your job to make me like your story, so make sure that it is really, really good. Good submissions I will find a place for, bad ones I won't. Only about 1 out of 20 (if that many) unsolicited submissions I get are accepted, and that number is going to greatly reduce as I already have too much inventory. Most of the stuff you see in NEGATIVE BURN are creators that I've asked to be in the pages, probably as much as 90% of the material. The chances of me accepting many unsolicited submissions are pretty slim, so be critical of your work and be honest with yourself before deciding to send a proposal out. I'm not trying to crush your dreams and I'm not trying to be harsh. I'm just being honest. This is a tough market, getting tougher by the minute. Good luck.

Joe Pruett
Editor

SECOND ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

NEGATIVE BURN

ISSUE 25

Featuring the talents of:

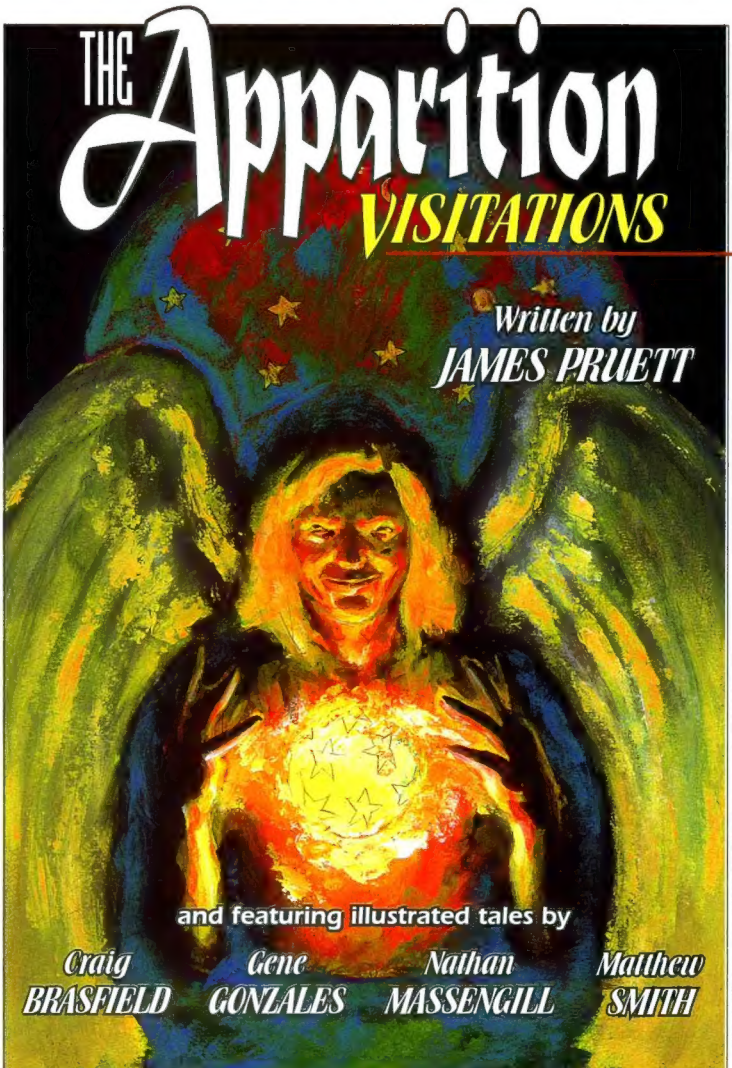
ALAN MOORE
DAVE GIBBONS
GUY DAVIS
BERNIE MIREAULT
TERI S. WOOD
DAVID MACK
PAUL POPE
NEIL GAIMAN
BRIAN BOLLAND
LARRY HANCOCK
MICHAEL CHEERKAS
JAMES PRUETT
MATTHEW SMITH
MARK RICKETTS
CHARLES MOORE
LISA MOORE
GENE GONZALES
GREG DiGENTI
BRADLEY WALTON
MIKE HOFFMAN

cover by MOEBIUS

64 BIG PAGES

JULY 1995

Collecting the short stories from NEGATIVE BURN and the debut of two NEW angelic encounters.



AUGUST 1995